

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY
PCT
INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT
(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference E- 1724/03	FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/IT 03/00405	International filing date (day/month/year) 27.06.2003	Priority date (day/month/year) 28.06.2002
International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC A24C5/47		
Applicant G.D SOCIETA' PER AZIONI et al.		

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.

2. This REPORT consists of a total of 4 sheets, including this cover sheet.
 - This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e. sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

These annexes consist of a total of 8 sheets.

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:
 - I Basis of the opinion
 - II Priority
 - III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
 - IV Lack of unity of invention
 - V Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
 - VI Certain documents cited
 - VII Certain defects in the international application
 - VIII Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 22.01.2004	Date of completion of this report 23.11.2004
Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority: European Patent Office D-80298 Munich	Authorized Officer Pille. S



**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. PCT/IT 03/00405

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the elements of the international application (*Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17)*):

Description, Pages

4-10 as originally filed
1-3, 3bis received on 07.04.2004 with letter of 29.03.2004

Claims, Numbers

1-10 received on 07.04.2004 with letter of 29.03.2004

Drawings, Sheets

1/2-2/2 as originally filed

2. With regard to the language, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language: , which is:

- the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of the international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
- the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
- the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

- contained in the international application in written form.
- filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
- furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
- furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
- The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
- The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished,

4. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- the description, pages:
- the claims, Nos.:
- the drawings, sheets:

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5. This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c)).

(Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.)

6. Additional observations, if necessary:

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims	1-10
	No: Claims	
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	4-10
	No: Claims	1-3
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	1-10
	No: Claims	

2. Citations and explanations

see separate sheet

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

International application No. PCT/IT 03/00405

- 1). The preamble and the feature "and of a length approximately equal to but no less than the length of the relative said strip" are known from US5474091 cited in the description. The subject-matter of claim 1 differs therefrom by the first feature of the characterising portion of claim 1.

This differentiating feature has two alternatives: "as they travel along the first portion (S1)" or "as they are transferred from said first portion (S1) to said second portion (S2)". It follows that according to claim 1 the precise location of the pitch reduction is not crucial.

US5349968 shows a similar pitch reduction as in the characterising portion of claim 1, see col. 4, l. 38-40. On col. 4, l. 55-59 the advantage of the pitch reduction is explained. The skilled person would therefore regard it as a normal design option to include this feature in the method described in document US5474091 in order to obtain the same advantage.

Moreover, there is no technical prejudice to combine the teaching of both cited documents as they relate to very similar methods.

- 2). The additional features of claims 2 and 3 are also known from US5474091, see col. 2, 2nd par.
- 3). The additional features of claims 4-10 are not shown or fairly suggested in the available prior art.